

What's New in the City



City of Natchitoches



Summer Splash & Early Childhood Enrollment Day May 5

The City of Natchitoches and the Natchitoches Parish Early Childhood Care and Education Network are teaming up to offer two informative events for families and children. Summer Splash and the Childcare and Preschool Programs Information and Enrollment Day will be held on Thursday, May 5, 2016 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Natchitoches Events Center.

Summer Splash is an informational fair that high-

lights summer activities throughout the city and parish for children of all ages. Summer Splash showcases educational, recreational and social youth programs taking place in Natchitoches this summer. Local groups will distribute information and registration forms for a variety of summer programs including sports camps, art dances, summer day camps, athletic programs, science camps, and more.

The Second Annual Childcare and Preschool Programs Information and Enrollment Day is for all families of children age birth to 4 years. Childcare centers, Head Start centers, and Pre-Kindergarten Programs will

be available to discuss enrollment and registration opportunities for children. Programs will provide information regarding hours of operation, rates, meal programs, CCAP, tax credit opportunities and educational curriculums.

Both events are free and open to the public.

For more information on Summer Splash, please contact the City of Natchitoches Main Street Office at (318) 352-2746. For more information on the Childcare and Preschool Programs Information and Enrollment Day, please contact Amy Metoyer, City of Natchitoches Early Childhood Coordinator, at (318) 238-7505.

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Did you know?

- The Cane River Green Market is open every Saturday through July 30th from 8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. on the downtown riverbank. Come shop local vendors of fresh produce, value-added products and handcrafted items. SNAP, Credit and Debit Cards Accepted. Free Zumba classes, demonstrations, kids' activities and live music are also available every Saturday. For more information, call (318) 352-CRGM.
- The 8th Annual El Camino Real Sale on the Trail takes place May 6 & 7 along 175 miles of the historic El Camino Real de los Tejas from LA Hwy 6 in Natchitoches to TX Hwy 21 in Alto, TX.
- The Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest Louisiana History Museum will host "The Life and Times of Francois Mignon" on Tuesday, May 10 at 6:00 p.m. Free and Open to the Public.
- The First Annual Dylan Kyle Poche Memorial Fishing Tournament will be held Sunday, May 8th at Toledo Bend Lake. —Cypress Bend. Entry fee \$100.

Dragon Boat Races Coming to Natchitoches May 28

The Northwestern State University Foundation is partnering with the Natchitoches Regional Medical Center Foundation to bring the first-ever dragon boat races to Natchitoches on Saturday, May 28, 2016. Races will take place on Cane River Lake in a festival atmosphere featuring food and craft vendors, live musical entertainment, dragon boat races, and a drummer's show-



case. Admission to the Dragon Boat Festival is free for spectators.

"Dragon boat racing has never taken place on Cane River and we hope to provide an entertaining, novel event for the community," said Vanner Erikson on behalf of the NSU Foundation. Dragon boat racing, which originated in southern China, has roots in ancient Chinese folk rituals.

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Dragon Boat Races (cont.)

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In recent years, the races have emerged as an international sport.

Registration for teams to compete is open until May 25. Dragon boat teams consist of 20 paddlers, with a minimum of 8 females, and one drummer. The helmsman will be provided. "We have eight teams currently, and we're expecting 15 for our first year," stated Erikson. There will be a practice session for each team during the week preceding the event.

Events on May 28 begin at 8:00 a.m. with the first races. Live performances by Kopacetic, Justin Merritt Band, and Johnny Earthquake and the Moondogs will provide entertainment throughout the day. At 12:30 p.m. spectators will not want to miss the drummer's showcase competition. All events will end by 6:00 p.m.

To register as a team or for more information, please visit www.northwesternalumni.com. Viewers can watch video clips of other races and download a registration form.

The dragon boat races are also sponsored by Cane River Waterway Commission, Historic District Development Commission, and the City of Natchitoches.

CRNHA to Host Rhythm & Birds May 7

Cane River National Heritage Area, Inc. (CRNHA) and the US Army Corps of Engineers will host a daylong family friendly open house on Saturday, May 7, 2016 at the Grand Ecure Visitor Center. The event entitled, *Rhythm and Birds*, will provide visitors with an opportunity to enjoy Grand Ecure's displays, grounds, and stunning view of the Red River all while learning about wildlife conservation and birding in Louisiana.

The open house will feature Erik Johnson, Director of Bird Conservation, Audubon Louisiana | National Audubon Society, discussing the nesting habits and migratory patterns of Prothonotary Warblers. Additionally, Johnson will promote Audubon Louisiana's Citizen Scientist Program and provide attendees with information on how to help gather vital information on our state's population of Prothonotary Warblers. Guided bird watching tours, children's activities and live music will be offered throughout the day. "We're excited to host this free family day and invite locals and visitors to come out and see us," commented Steven Fullen, CRNHA Director of Interpretation.

Rhythm and Birds is free and open to the public. Scheduled activities will take place from 12:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 7, 2016. This event is supported by the National Environmental Education Foundation, Toyota Motor Sales USA, Inc. and Volunteer Louisiana. Hospitality refreshments are sponsored by Coca-Cola Bottling Company UNITED.

For more information, contact CRNHA at (318) 356-5555 or info@CaneRiverNHA.org.

7th Annual Cane River Music Festival May 14th

The Cane River region has a rich tradition of live musical performance. In honor of this tradition and the Centennial of the National Park Service, Cane River Creole National Historical Park will host the 7th Annual Cane River Music Festival at Oakland Plantation on May 14. This event is free and open to the public.

This year's performers include some new faces and old favorites. Larry Garner, a Louisiana bluesman who has performed all over the world, is making his first appearance at the Music Festival. A talented songwriter, Garner has been named Blues Songwriter of the Year three times by the BBC. He was inducted into the Louisiana Blues Hall of Fame in 2002.

For the first time, the event will feature Major Handy, a Zydeco musician and blues accordion player who grew up surrounded by Creole music. He has fine-tuned his skills on the guitar, bass, piano and accordion, along with vocals. He has played with Rockin' Dopsie's band and with Buckwheat Zydeco's original lineup.

This will also be the first appearance for the Snake Doctors, a rhythm and blues, country blues duo. They are lifelong musicians with a deep understanding and appreciation of American music

and its history, especially the blues.

For the fourth year in a row, the event will feature the locally renowned LaCour Trio. The LaCours are sure to get the crowd moving with their energetic blend of zydeco, jazz, and funk.

Goldman Thibodeaux and the Lawtell Playboys will be returning for their 7th appearance. Thibodeaux has been recognized by Northwestern State University as a Master Folk Artist and in 2012 he received a Creole Heritage award recognizing his commitment to the Creole culture and staying true to the traditional la-la music associated with the Creoles.

The free festival will take place from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Bring folding chairs, picnic lunches, and umbrellas and relax in the shade of the oak alley and listen to some of the best music around. Oakland Plantation is located at 4386 Hwy 494, Natchez, LA 71456. To reach Oakland Plantation, take I-49 to Exit 127, Flora/Cypress. Head east on LA Highway 120 toward Cypress. Cross over LA Highway 1 onto LA Highway 494. The parking lot and entrance pavilion for Oakland is 4.5 miles east of Highway 1 on the left. Parking is limited so please car pool. For more information, call (318) 356-8441.

Gov. John Bel Edwards and Dr. James L. Holly to Speak at NSU's Spring Commencement May 6



Gov. John Bel Edwards and Dr. James L. Holly will be the speakers at Northwestern State University's spring commencement Friday, May 6, 2016.

Edwards will speak to graduates from the College of Arts and Sciences, the Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development and the Louisiana Scholar's college at 10:00 a.m. Holly will speak to graduates from the College of Business and Technology and the College of Nursing and School of Allied Health at 3:00 p.m. More than 950 students are expected to receive degrees.

Graduates of the Military Science/ROTC program will be commissioned as second lieutenants in the U.S. Army during the morning ceremony.

Edwards was sworn in as the 56th governor of Louisiana in January. The governor grew up in Amite as one of eight children. With four Tangipahoa Parish sheriffs in his lineage, he learned the importance of public service at an early age.

Edwards graduated in 1988 from the United States Military Academy at West Point. The governor served eight years as an Airborne Ranger on active duty with the United States Army and commanded a rifle company in the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He went on to graduate Order of the Coif from Louisiana State University Law Center and set up a civil law practice in his hometown of Amite.

In 2008, he was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives from District 72, where he served for eight years until the voters of Louisiana elected him governor in November 2015.

Edwards and his wife, First Lady Donna Edwards, have three children: Samantha Bel, Sarah Ellen and John Miller.

Holly, a 1965 graduate of Northwestern, is founder and chief executive officer of Southeast Texas Medical Associates. He is a graduate of the University of Texas Medical School in San Antonio, where he is an adjunct professor of Family and Community Medicine. Holly is an associate clinical professor in the Department of Internal Medicine at Texas A&M College of Medicine. He was a

2016 inductee into the Northwestern State Alumni Hall of Distinction, the Long Purple Line.

Holly received the 2015 inaugural National Patient-Centered Medical Home Practice Award from the Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative and the 2012 National HIMSS Physician IT Leadership Award.

Last year, on the occasion of their 50th anniversary and the 50th anniversary of their graduation from Northwestern State, Holly surprised his wife, Carolyn Bellue Holly, at the NSU Golden Jubilee luncheon by announcing the establishment of Carolyn Bellue Holly Distinguished Professorship in Teaching and Learning. In addition to the Distinguished Professorship endowment, the Hollys have honored their mothers with the Marie Cobb Bellue Scholarship in Teaching and Learning and the Irene Woodruff Holly Scholarship in Health Care Education.

The Hollys have advanced medical education at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio, making several financial contributions to the school. James and Carolyn Holly have also received numerous honors at the Health Science Center including the Dr. and Mrs. James L. Holly University Auditorium and membership on The University of Texas Chancellors Council. In 2012, James Holly was named the 2012 Distinguished Alumni of the School of Medicine.

Dr. James D. Knecht to Receive Honorary Doctorate

Northwestern State University will award an honorary doctorate of humane letters to Natchitoches physician Dr. James D. Knecht at spring commencement exercises Friday, May 6, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. The Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System has approved the awarding of the honorary doctorate.

Knecht has been instru-

mental in creating a solid foundation for the establishment of an extensive medical community in Natchitoches over the past 35 years. He has maintained a widely recognized private practice in family medicine during that period while also playing a major role in attracting new medical personnel, facilities and services to the parish.

Throughout his medical

practice in Natchitoches, Knecht has served as a physician for Northwestern State University athletic teams. He has provided those services to the university since the early 1980s without pay, spending countless hours at athletic events in Natchitoches and numerous other sites and in treating injuries, conducting physical exams, and providing other medical assistance.



Oldest Permanent
Settlement in the
Louisiana Purchase

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**Congratulations to
the graduates of
2016!**

The public is invited to join Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser and the Natchitoches Parish Convention and Visitors Bureau for a Tourism Rally Press Conference on Wednesday, May 4, 2016. The event will be held at Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Historic Site located at 155 Jefferson Street. The event is free and open to the public.

In celebration of National Travel & Tourism Week, the press conference will highlight the importance of and impact of tourism on the State of Louisiana as well as the City of Natchitoches.

Just recently, Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser announced 2015 as the 4th consecutive record-breaking year for tourism in Louisiana. Louisiana welcomed 28.9 million visitors in 2015 compared to 28.7 million in 2014, and these tourists spent \$11.5 billion compared to 2014's \$11.2 billion, which is a 2.7 percent increase.

In 2015, the travel and tourism industry in Louisiana generated \$843 million in state tax revenue compared to \$836 million last year. The revenue generated through domestic and international visitors represents a more than 38-to-1 return on investment of state funding. Tourism and hospitality continues to be one of the top five employers in Louisiana.

"Despite very difficult economic times in Louisiana, tourism has and continues to be an economic generator for the state," Lt. Governor Nungesser said. "With every dollar the state of Louisiana invests in our tourism efforts, we generate another \$38. That is an incredible return on the investment in times like these and represents an incredible savings for the taxpayers of Louisiana."

NATCHITOCHEs 
TOURISM

Upcoming Holidays and Important Events



Every Saturday — Cane River
Green Market from 8 a.m. to noon
on the downtown riverbank.

May 6: Northwestern State University
Spring Commencement, 10:00 a.m. & 3:00
p.m. at Prather Coliseum

May 19: Historic District Development Com-
mission meeting, 10:00 a.m. at the Natchito-
ches Arts Center

May 2: Historic District Commission meet-
ing, 5:00 p.m. at the Natchitoches Arts Cen-
ter

May 7: Rhythm and Birds, 12:00 p.m.—5:00
p.m. at Grand Ecore Visitor Center

May 21: Kids to Parks Day at Cane River
Green Market, 8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. on
the Downtown Riverbank

May 3: Planning & Zoning meeting, 5:30
p.m. at the Natchitoches Arts Center

May 8: Dylan Kyle Poche Memorial Fishing
Tournament, 7:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. at
Toledo Bend Lake—Cypress Bend

May 21: Fleur de Lis Arts and Craft Show,
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Natchitoches
Events Center

May 4: National Tourism & Travel Week
Rally, 3:00 p.m. at Fort St. Jean Baptiste
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May 9: City Council meeting, 5:30 p.m. at
the Natchitoches Arts Center

May 23: City Council meeting, 5:30 p.m. at
Natchitoches Arts Center

May 5: Summer Splash, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00
p.m. at the Natchitoches Events Center

May 14: 7th Annual Cane River Music Festi-
val, 11:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. at Oakland Plan-
tation

May 28: Dragon Boat Races & Festival,
8:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m. on the Downtown
Riverbank

May 5: Childcare and Preschool Information
and Enrollment Day, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
at the Natchitoches Events Center

May 16: Natchitoches Airport Commission
meeting, 5:00 p.m. at Natchitoches Re-
gional Airport

May 30: Memorial
Day Holiday. City
Offices Closed.

